

Message Text

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ACTION PM-03

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SSO-00 PA-01 PRS-01 USIE-00

CIAE-00 INR-07 NSAE-00 INRE-00 L-02 SS-15 NSC-05

NSCE-00 /047 W

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O R 181211Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY LONDON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9372

INFO SECDEF

USCINCEUR

CINCUSAFE

HQ 3AF RAF MILDENHALL

S E C R E T LONDON 04144

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MILI, OCLR, GW, UK, NL

SUBJECT: EUROPEAN DEPLOYMENT OF ADVANCED LOCATION STRIKE
SYSTEM (ALSS)

REF: (A) STATE 37079 (B) STATE 58876

1. FCO INFORMED US LATE EVENING OF MARCH 17 THAT PRIME
MINISTER HAS APPROVED ALSS DEPLOYMENT. THUS, ONLY
PUBLIC AFFAIRS GUIDANCE STANDS IN THE WAY OF FINAL PRO-
JECT APPROVAL.

2. MOD AND FCO CONTINUE TO BE DISSATISFIED WITH CONTIN-
GENCY STATEMENT REF. (B), WHICH STRIKES THEM AS SIGNIFI-
CANTLY MORE EQUIVOCAL AND GENERALLY UNHELPFUL THAN THAT
ORIGINALLY AGREED. AS THEY CLEARED BOTH THE PROGRAM AND
PRESS GUIDANCE SIMULTANEOUSLY, BOTH MINISTRIES AGREE TH-
EY CANNOT GIVE FINAL APPROVAL ON PROGRAM UNTIL LANGUAGE
CHANGE IS FLAGGED TO MINISTERS CONCERNED.

3. DIFFERENCES BETWEEN STATEMENTS PUT TO MINISTERS (I.E.
"OPERATIONAL TEST OVER SEVERAL ALLIED COUNTRIES OF A
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PRECISION, HIGH ALTITUDE NAVIGATION SYSTEM.") AND THAT

APPROVED REF. (B) (I.E. "...TEST PROGRAM, WHICH WILL INCLUDE EXTENSIVE HIGH ALTITUDE PRECISION NAVIGATION.") APPEAR SLIGHT BUT STILL WILL REQUIRE CLEARANCE BY HMG. FCO DESIRES CONFIRMATION THAT WE WANT IT TO "GO BACK DOWN THE LINE" TO CLEAR THIS CHANGE, WHICH IT BELIEVES ONLY ALTERS A USEFUL, FACTUAL STATEMENT TO ONE THAT "STATES ONLY A VACUUM". CLEARLY, FCO WOULD PREFER A RETURN TO THE EARLIER LANGUAGE WHICH IT CONSIDERS BOTH MORE PRECISE AND MORE HONEST.

4. IF DEPARTMENT WISHES RETAIN LANGUAGE REF. (B) REQUEST FULL RATIONALE FOR CHANGE SO THAT FCO CAN EXPLAIN IT TO MINISTERS. EMBASSY DOES NOT ANTICIPATE THAT INSISTENCE ON NEW U.S. PRESS STATEMENT WILL LEAD HMG TO REVERSE POSITION ON PROGRAM APPROVAL, BUT IT SEEMS CERTAIN TO ADD 24 - 48 HOURS TO TIME AT WHICH WE WILL RECEIVE FINAL GO AHEAD.

RICHARDSON

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NNN

Message Attributes

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